

# Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID

VOL. 7 - NO. 8

MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK.

AUGUST - 1965

## News and Notes

The meeting at Alton resulted in three baptisms. Brother Emmet Smith did the preaching.

Richard England will be with the Agnos church of Christ in a meeting, August 15-25. He is to be in a meeting in Wichita, Kansas September 8-12. Fred Case will be in a meeting at Byron, August 23-30.

Brother Bill Richardson has recently moved to Mt. Home, Arkansas to work with the church. Brother Richardson has spent the greater part of the past seventeen years doing mission work in Holland. His moving to this area will be a great blessing to all of us as well and to the church in Mt. Home. Bill and Carol have five children. Carol's father, Ralph Aycock, also has done a great deal of mission work in Holland. He is presently preaching in the western part of our country. Her brother-in-law, Bill Jones, is teaching at Oklahoma Christian College. Brother Richardson's brother is also a gospel preacher.

## Acknowledge Contributions

Orbie Robbins, Elizabeth, Arkansas	\$ 1.00
George Huett, Elizabeth, Ark.	1.00
A friend of the paper, Hardy, Ark.	2.00
R. R. Hicks, Mammoth Spring, Ark.	2.00
Joe D. Price, Blackwater, Mo.	1.00
Bruce Furrman, English Bluff	3.00
Noble McFann, English Bluff	2.00
Noel McFann, English Bluff	1.00
Salem, Ark. Church of Christ	5.00
Agnos, Ark. Church of Christ	5.00

## "In the Truth"

By Robert Henley

In the third Epistle of John the key phrase of the letter is "the truth", and in this letter may be found some vital admonitions to individuals in the church where there may be a certain amount of confusion. As very similar conditions exist today in many places the letter becomes of important consideration and study.

Here we find John writing not as an Apostle but as an elder to a well beloved friend, Gaius, a member of some congregation. John had previously written to only to have his letter cast aside. Gaius was evidently a righteous man as John complimented him highly, as others had done, for his walking in the truth. He then gives Gaius instructions regarding ministering brethren. He was to receive them and help them on their way and in their work. These instructions are very applicable to us today, even as then.

Continuing with the letter, we now meet a character, one Diotrephes, who lives today in the hearts of many. This man had been allowed to take preeminence among the brethren at that place. He had refused to receive John and the apostolic letters. He practiced against such maliciously, would not receive the brethren and forbade others to do so, and evidently by his usurped power cast them out of the church. This was not in keeping with the truth, the belief and practices of the early church but became a common

Wheeling Church of Christ	5.00
English Bluff Church of Christ (2 months)	10.00
Hatfield Church of Christ	5.00
Morrison Church of Christ	5.00
Elizabeth Church of Christ	5.00

"We must have more ROOTAGE if we are to have more FRUITAGE: we cannot bear fruit upward unless we are able to take root downward."

Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

practice later as the church drifted farther and farther into apostasy. John wrote this letter, not to the church but to a faithful member, to bring to him comfort as well as comfort and instruction to others who stood steadfastly in the faith and in verse 11 instructs Gaius in what they should do, that the work of Diotrephes was evil and was not of the truth.

Today we find all over the land men who seek preeminence in the household of God. Men who seek to dominate and in some instances to rule or ruin. These men may or may not be officers or ministers of the congregation but by other influences such as a strong personality or wealth seek to get their way. The brethren in these cases seeking to avoid conflict or even division, meekly yet wrongfully submit to this domination. This is an evil thing and has the mark of the Phariseism that was so strongly condemned by the Lord in Matt. 23:1-12. Such acts bring offense to the faithful brethren. They heed not the word of the Lord found in Matt. 13:41 in which he said that the angels would gather out of the kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity. A woe is pronounced upon those who cause offense to the children of God and we as His children must not follow after such a one. Instead of being led by some man's personal ambitions we should concentrate all our strength in adhering to the truth, Christ, to live with and die in Him.

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**PUBLISHED MONTHLY  
FREE SUBSCRIPTION**

**SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID  
MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK.**

**SUPPORTED BY:**

**CHURCHES OF CHRIST  
IN THIS AREA**

**EDITORS:**

**CLOVIS RAGSDALE  
RICHARD ENGLAND**

The following article appeared in the September, 1963 issue of the Fulton County Gospel News. In that many have discussed this issue lately, we the Elders of the church in Mammoth Spring want known to all what we believe to be the truth in this matter. We do not believe the benevolent work of the church must be done AS WE DO IT, but that IT MUST BE DONE. Further, to divide the church over these matters is sinful, as we all know the Bible to teach. Churches of this area have for years done a good deal of benevolent work in sending assistance to some of the children's homes among us. Some have seen fit to cease this. Our plea is not necessarily to do such work AS WE DO IT, but, please continue in the work of benevolence and above all, do not divide the church of the Lord. After carefully studying the following article of Brother England's, we do fully subscribe to it as being according to the truth of God. We recommend that you carefully study it with prayer for the unity of the church.

The Elders of the church

Mammoth Spring, Ark.

Virgil Boler

Luther J. Haney

Luther Nicholson

Cecil C. Smith

Ira Smith

Marvin H. Powell

## Is the Church Obligated?

Richard England

Mammoth Spring, Arkansas

Many times when people espouse a false doctrine, they will accept other false ideas in efforts to uphold the first, rather than simply abandoning it and turning to the obvious truth. This has been the sad plight of those who have opposed the orphans' homes which are being supported by churches of Christ. Not many years ago the cry of those who opposed the homes was: "It is not a question of is the church obligated." In fact, one of the more able and respected men in this camp (W. Curtis Porter) said that all of us recognize the obligation of the church to care for orphans. Finding difficulty in defending the obligation of the church to care for orphans and opposing the homes which are supported by the church at the same time, these brethren have now retreated to the idea that the church is not obligated to anyone but saints (which excludes little children).

Just what is the obligation of the church in the field of benevolence? To answer this, one must have a clear understanding of the church. The church is not a mere idea; it does not exist separate and apart from the people who belong to it; nor is it money and financial power. The church is the souls of men who have obeyed the gospel of Christ. These men have been "called out" of worldly ways into the way of Jesus, the word "religion" designates that which is practiced in an effort to be well pleasing to God and thereby receive His favor and inherit eternal life. Any plan or systematic practice followed by men for this purpose is called "religion". But not all of these plans and practices accomplish this end. Only those who are following the plan set forth by Jesus Christ are practicing true religion. That is, they are the only ones with whom God is well pleased. Seeing that

all who are faithful to the doctrine of Christ are in the church, and that no one else is in the church, it can truthfully be said that the church is the only true religious organization in the world. Any religious act performed so as to be of benefit to the person doing it, must be performed as a member of the church. There is only one true religion. There is not one religion for us to practice as a group and another to practice as an individual. There are not any religious acts commanded for an individual to perform separate and apart from all other Christians making it a sin for him to perform them if other Christians were doing the same things at the same time. Any authorized religious act performed by an individual may be performed by all individuals of the church at the same time, in the same place, for the same purpose, and in consideration of the other persons doing it. This is the church doing it, whether it was planned in a Sunday morning assembly or not. This conclusion we reach: ANY RELIGIOUS ACT WHICH AN INDIVIDUAL IS OBLIGATED TO PERFORM, ALL INDIVIDUALS ARE OBLIGATED TO PERFORM. IF THEY ALL PERFORM THIS AT THE SAME TIME, CONSIDERING ONE ANOTHER IN THE MATTER (which is to do it cooperatively or collectively) IT IS THE CHURCH DOING IT, AND RIGHTFULLY SO.

Now back to our question: what is the obligation of the church in the field of benevolence? While Jesus was on the earth a lawyer asked Him, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He was asking about RELIGION. Jesus told him to love God and his neighbor. "But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?" The story of the good Samaritan followed as answer to his question. Notice the Samaritan is pictured as practicing part of that which will help him inherit eternal life, or in other words, true religion. He helped a man in need. Even though this was spoken before the death of Christ, we know that it

is that which He expects of us in the church. In Galatians 6:8 Paul writes: "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Was he talking of religion? Certainly so. He continues: "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." It is an absurd assumption to say that these people understood by this that they could practice certain religious acts by themselves, but it would be sin if they did them together. James 1:27 plainly states that "PURE RELIGION" is "to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world". Sure he mentions a man as an individual, but he is not saying that this is a religious act which one must perform only by himself, and that if others did the same thing at the same time it would become sin. If a child were in need and the individuals of the church had the means to care for it, they must do so. Whether the Christians meet the needs of the child by separately placing needed items in his hands or by putting it together at the meeting place of the church and sending it to the child in one bundle, it is still the church doing it, and in so doing, practicing pure religion. To say that the church cannot practice pure religion is ridiculous.

If it should be conceded that the church is obligated to orphan children (even though they be not members of the church), as soon as the one conceding it would go about to show the details of how we might legally provide the necessities of life for them, he would have to include every element opposed by those who object to the homes for children which are presently supported by churches of Christ. This is the reason those who have opposed the homes for children have now moved to the position of teaching that the church is not obligated to care for needy

children who are not saints (which means the church cannot provide a home for an orphan baby). Not only CAN the church provide for needy children, IT IS OBLIGATED TO DO SO. If the child is homeless, the church cannot BE A HOME, but it can see to it that a home is provided. In providing this home, we must do so according to the laws of our land which govern the details of such (Romans 13:1-7).

## What Faith Will Do

Clovis Ragsdale

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews opens with a definition of faith. The middle verses of that chapter tell of several Biblical heroes of the past who were able to please God by acts of faith. The closing verses point out that these persons only received a promise of better things, that we today now have what they were promised. We have this in the fact that Jesus Christ died on the cross, shedding the blood that would make possible forgiveness of sins.

The twelfth chapter says that because of this we should lay aside every sin that doth so easily beset us, every weight and hinder us, and to run with patience the race set before us. We are to look to Christ as the author and finisher of our faith because of the fact that he endured the cross for our sakes.

Without faith none of the above mentioned could be achieved. Heb. 11:6 states that without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith in God must come by hearing of God and not by sight. No one has ever seen God face to face. Christ said in John 4:24 that God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Faith will change the life of a person in accordance with the amount of faith he possesses. It is very noticeable in the life of a drunkard who quits all his drinking in order to become a Christian. A man who can lay aside a sinful life and live the kind of a

life a Christian should live must possess great faith. People who make great sacrifices for the cause of Christ are examples of great faith. The many who have literally given their lives for Christ stand as great examples of faith.

Faith will prompt people in our day to repent of sinful lives and confess their belief in Jesus Christ and submit to the command to be buried in water as a likeness to the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord. After becoming a Christian faith continues to play a very important part in our serving God. It will prompt us to keep sin from again taking over in our life. It will inspire us to worship at the appointed time without having to be prodded. To give of time, talent, and finance in the interest of the Lord's church.

Faith gives assurance to all when their time comes to pass from this life. There have been many cases of people who were infidels until death hovered over them, only then to renounce infidelity in their dying hour. How hopeless must be the feeling of one who realized too late that man is the product of a higher power. To realize too late that the world, with all of its wonderful laws of nature, was not an accident. How different to that of the faithful Christian who can look forward to wonderful joys in God's eternal presence. It was because of faith that Paul longed to pass from this life, to go to his reward. Very few possess the great faith of Paul, but all Christians should call upon their faith in good times and in bad. In the hour of death it will stand us in good stead as we say goodbye to earthly ties.

Faith is the base of the Christian life. All else is built upon this firm foundation. We should remember that faith comes from the word of God and that by studying this word our faith will grow and grow, culminating in the joys of Heaven itself.

"The devil is willing for a person to confess Christianity as long as he does not practice it."

## The Truth - -

Orbie Robbins  
Elizabeth, Arkansas

Jesus said: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32) First let us consider the question: "What is truth". (1) "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth". (John 17:17) (2) "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth". (Ps. 119:142) (3) Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the father but by me." (John 14:6)

Secondly, we must know the truth. (1) "Then said Jesus unto those jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed: ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free". (John 8:31,32) (2) Paul said: "Who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2:4) Peter said: "God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance". (2 Peter 3:9) (3) Solomon stated: "By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil." (Prov. 16:6)

We must obey the truth. (1). "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit." (1 Peter 1:21) (2) Paul said: "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered you, being then made free from sin, became the servant of righteousness." (Romans 6:17, 18) (3) Jesus stated "not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21)

Now let us consider the proper attitude toward truth. (1) "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." (2 Cor. 13:8) (2) "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." (3 John 1:4) (3) "Lead me in thy truth and teach

me: for thou art the God of my salvation, on thee do I wait all the day." (Ps. 25:5) (4) "Buy the truth and sell it not: also wisdom and instruction and understanding." (Prov. 23:23)

We must continue in the truth. (1) The sweet singer of Israel said: "withhold not thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy loving kindness and thy truth continually preserve me." (Ps. 40:11) (2) "Let no mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them upon thy neck: write them upon the table of thine heart." (Prov. 3:3) (3) "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." (Isa. 26:2) (4) Paul said: "Am I therefore your enemy because I tell you the truth." (Gal. 4:16)

What about those who fail to believe and obey the truth? (1) They will be damned. "That they might all be damned who believe not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. 2:12) (2) "But unto them that are contentious and do not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil of the Jew first, and also of the Gentiles." (Rom. 2:8,9) (3) The wrath of God is revealed against all who hold the truth wrong. (Romans 1:18) (4) The Lord said: "he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mk. 16:16) "Except ye believe that I am he ye shall die in your sins and whither I go ye cannot come." (John 8:24)

In conclusion: We will be judged by the truth. (1) "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:48) (2) "He cometh to judge the earth, he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." (Ps. 96:13) (3) "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." (Romans 2:2) Therefore since we are to be judged by the truth, we need to obey it to become a Christian, and abide in it to finally en-

ter heaven in the after awhile. (Heb. 5:8, 9; Rev. 22:14; Ecc. 12:13, 14).

## "From the Preacher's Desk"

By Bill Richardson

Thanks to all of you for making us feel so welcome. We know we will enjoy being with you. We all have the same purposes in mind — the growth of both the individual and the congregation. Any growth must begin with the individual. Here are a few simple rules which are absolutely essential to our growth as Christians:

1. **RIGHT ATTITUDE AND DISPOSITION.** Love, kindness, friendliness, understanding and sympathy must be diligently cultivated.
  2. **PRAYER.** Fervent, daily prayers of FAITH do more than we dream of to draw us close to God and man.
  3. **Godly LIVING.** Without holiness we shall not see God. Our LIGHT must shine.
  4. **BIBLE STUDY.** Unless we grow in knowledge we do not grow at all.
  5. **FAITHFUL ATTENDANCE.** Fellowship, Bible Study, Worship and Evangelism all do much to help us grow. Please do not neglect any of these!
  6. **GIVING.** NO SPIRITUAL growth takes place until we learn to reach out to both the physical and spiritual needs of others. This we do when we give.
  7. **PERSONAL EVANGELISM.** Nothing involves one more completely in the Christian life than personal work to save souls. Try it. You may save your own soul.
- Why not write these items down and grade your growth each week. Don't just ask, "am I a good Christian?" but ask, "Am I a GROWING Christian?"

Bill Richardson

God remembers when others forget.

Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.